

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please amend the drawings as follows, as shown on the enclosed corrected formal drawing thereof.

In Figure 24

Add reference characters “91a”, “91b”, “91c”, “92a”, “92b”, and “92c” thereto, as shown on the attached corrected formal drawing of Figure 24.

REMARKS

Summary

New independent Claim 11 recites at least one feature not understood to be disclosed or suggested by the patent to Skov et al., as will be discussed below. Therefore, the application is now in allowable form.

Status of the Claims

Claims 11 and 12 are pending, with Claim 11 being independent. Claims 1-10 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 11 and 12 are newly added. Claims 11 and 12 read on the elected species of Figure 25.

Requested Action

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejection in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Formal Drawing Amendment

Applicants have amended Figure 24 to include reference characters discussed in the specification and shown in Figures 22A and 23A. No new matter has been added.

Rejection

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Design Patent No. 373,605 (Skov et al.).

Response to Rejection

In response, while not conceding the propriety of the rejection, Claims 1-10 have been cancelled without prejudice and Claims 11 and 12 have been newly added. Applicants submit that as amended, these claims are allowable for the following reasons.

Independent Claim 11 relates to a part for rotatably supporting one end of a developing roller of a process cartridge detachable with respect to an image forming apparatus. The apparatus comprises a sliding portion configured and positioned to rotatably support one end of the developing roller, a plurality of receiving portions which are disposed at positions different from the sliding portion and are supported by a part adjacent to the lower side of the part when a plurality of parts are stacked, and a plurality of abutment portions which are disposed at positions different from the sliding portion and support a part adjacent to the upper side of the part when a plurality of parts are stacked. The distance between one of the abutment portions and a corresponding one of the receiving portions is substantially the same for any pair of one abutment portion and a corresponding receiving portion. The apparatus further comprises overlap portions which overlap a portion of the part adjacent the upper side of said part or overlap a portion of the part adjacent the lower side of said part when a plurality of parts are stacked. The sliding portion does not come into contact with the part adjacent the upper side of the part and the part adjacent the lower side of the part when a plurality of parts are stacked.

By this arrangement, it is possible to reduce the height of a stack of parts, thereby permitting a larger number of parts to be stacked in a smaller space, as discussed at pages 38 and 39 of the originally-filed specification.

In contrast, the patent to Skov et al. is not understood to disclose or suggest a sliding portion configured and positioned to rotatably support one end of a developing roller of a process cartridge, as recited by Claim 11. As a result, this patent is not understood to disclose or suggest a plurality of receiving portions and a plurality of abutment portions which are disposed at positions different from the sliding portion, as also recited by Claim 11. And therefore, this patent is not understood to disclose or suggest that a sliding portion does not come into contact with a part adjacent the upper side of the part and a part adjacent the lower side of the part when a plurality of parts are stacked, as also recited by Claim 11. Rather, the Skov et al. patent is merely understood to disclose a toy building element without any such sliding portion.

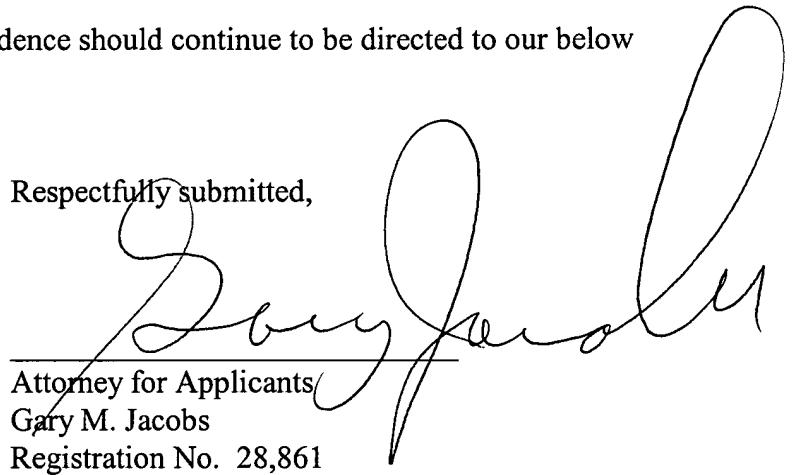
Since Claim 11 is understood to recite at least three features not found in the Skov et al. patent, Claim 11 is not understood to be anticipated by this patent. For this reason, Applicants submit that Claim 11 is allowable over this document. Dependent Claim 12 is allowable for the reasons given for independent Claim 11 and because it recites features that are patentable in their own right. Individual consideration of dependent Claim 12 is respectfully solicited.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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